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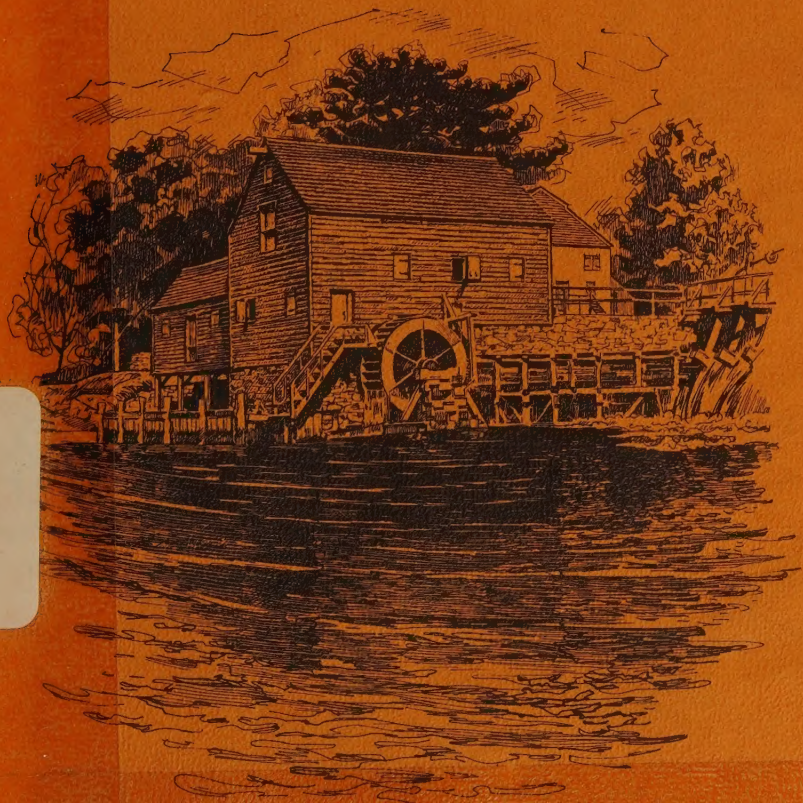
Philipsburg Manor



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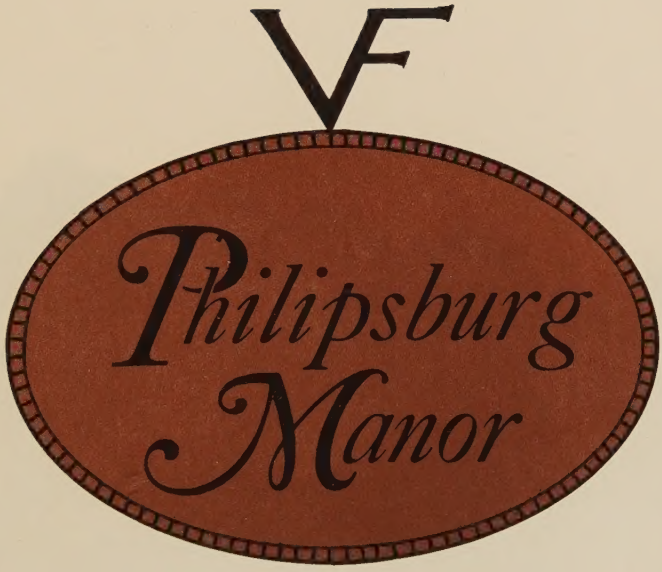

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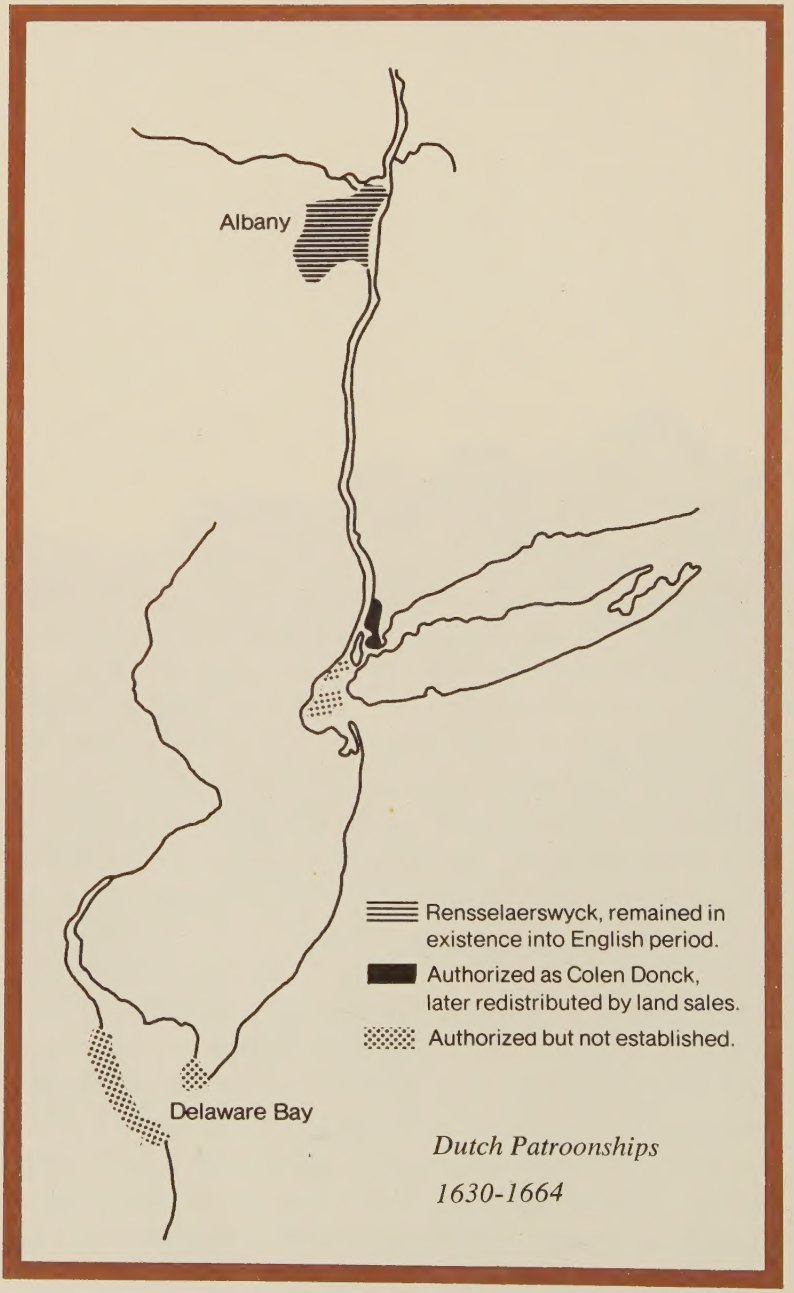
Sleepy Hollow Restorations

Tarrytown, N. Y.

49052

To understand the significance of the restored structures which re-create an authentic, early 1700 Dutch-American trading center at Philipsburg Manor more than the human senses should be used. An appreciation of history and a fairly active imagination help to place restored Philipsburg Manor in its proper framework. The visitor sees a stone Manor House, an oak dam across the Pocantico River and a handsome gristmill. He may then pause to listen to the churning mill wheel and the water flowing over the dam's spillway. Most importantly he may view restored Philipsburg Manor as an honest flashback, painstakingly executed where nothing else has ever existed since the original land purchase from Indian tribes in the 1600s. The restoration is a reflection of the early 18th century when the Hudson River valley still carried the hearty flavor of its Dutch heritage. The American Revolution, though eons away in some colonists' thoughts, was only decades away in time.


Albany
Delaware Bay
Rensselaerswyck, remained in existence into English period.
Authorized as Colen Donck, later redistributed by land sales.
Authorized but not established.

Dutch Patroonships

1630-1664

This was originally the country home of a man who was the central figure in one of the first success stories of the new world. He was a businessman who began as a carpenter and ended a prosperous career by owning a third of Westchester County. Today's restored Philipsburg Manor encompasses 20 acres. It is all that is left of this vast holding which was typical of those that once extended virtually from New York City to Albany.

As a beginning the visitor should imagine that day in 1609, when Henry Hudson gazed from the rail of his ship, the *Half Moon,* and looked upon the land meeting the river that would one day bear his name. One of his officers later wrote: "this is a very good land . . . and a pleasant land to see."

About sixteen years later the Dutch, who had sponsored Hudson's explorations, founded New Amsterdam on Manhattan Island after first establishing Fort Orange at Albany.

Records show that by 1653 a Frederick Philipse lived in New Amsterdam. A Dutchman, Philipse was a carpenter possessing energy and the undisguised traits of an opportunist.

Frederick Philipse, eventual creator of Philipsburg Manor, worked for Peter Stuyvesant, extended his interests to land acquisition and operated vessels as a commercial trader. By the time the British had seized New Amsterdam in 1664 he was already a man of some means.

An artist's conception of a Hudson River sloop which was principal means of water transportation on the river into the 19th Century.

New Amsterdam about 1650 as it appeared when the Philipse family first lived there.

The British takeover of the Dutch colony was bloodless and peaceful and caused barely a ripple in the smooth waters of the settlement's commercial life. Frederick Philipse swore allegiance to the British crown and went about the business of buying land. Upon his death he had compiled one of the richest landholdings in America, an estate that extended from Spuyten Duyvil at the northern tip of Manhattan to the Croton River, bordering what is now the Village of Croton-on-Hudson. The restoration of Philipsburg Manor in North Tarrytown on the original site of the dam and gristmill near the cove that provided an excellent harbor for Hudson River sloops is practically all that remains of this once huge landholding. Its story is a study of 17th and early 18th century manorial life in New York.

Frederick Philipse was baptised in Bolswaert, a small town in the province of Friesland, the Netherlands, in 1626. That was the very year that the Indians sold Manhattan Island to Peter Minuit, Director-General of New Netherlands for the Dutch West India Company. The son of a slater, he learned carpentry as a young man.

Although family legend said Frederick sailed to America in 1647 on the same ship that brought Peter Stuyvesant to his post as the Dutch Governor of the colony, no record exists of Frederick's being in America until May, 1653, when he was cited as appraiser of a house and lot in New Amsterdam.

A busy seven years followed during which Frederick could not have met all his needs by carpentry. An entry in the town records for September, 1660, concerns Frederick's request to the West India Company for a charter to sail one of its sloops to Virginia on a trading venture. The document refers to "Frederick Philipse, late the Director's carpenter."

What happened was residents of New Amsterdam in demanding privileges from the West India Company had won advantages called the Great Burgher Right and the Small Burgher Right. Military men, government officials and the clergy benefited by the former and other residents found the latter allowed them to engage in business and commerce and to acquire land.

Frederick Philipse took full advantage of that statute.

Within a few years he was owner of several parcels of land, buildings and a warehouse while shipping goods overseas and operating at least one ship of his own. He capped his activities by marrying one of the wealthiest widows in New York Colony, herself a businesswoman and trader.

Margaret Hardenbroeck inherited a handsome estate from her husband, Peter Rudolphus de Vries. This provided her new spouse the financial backing for his expanding enterprises. From the marriage in 1662 to Margaret's death before 1692 the couple prospered tremendously. She shared his responsibilities as he enlarged his overseas trading and became a shipowner and a leader in the business community. Some historians dealing with the period called his wife "Margaret

Diagram of Bolswaert, the small town in the Netherlands where Frederick Philipse was born.

Seal of the City of New York, 1686, with Imperial Crown

the Commercial." Envy undoubtedly must have been a factor in the vitriolic criticism then aimed at her because of her shrewdness, daring and cleverness.

Philipse's ships were seen in most ports of the western world. They carried furs, whale oil and tobacco to England from New York and Virginia; sugar, cocoa, sassafras and logwood from the West Indies; grain, breadstuffs, animals and lumber from America to the West Indies; manufactured goods from England and Europe to America; and East Indian cloth, spices, ivory and slaves from Africa to America.

Quite accurately Philipse's descendants had often pointed out that the figures on the present corporate seal of New York City could just as well have been used for Frederick's coat of arms. They are a sailor, an Indian, a windmill, two beavers and two barrels, signifying the sources of the city's growth. The sailors represent the Dutch seafarers who first opened the new colony's trade with the Indians; the furs comprised the city's early trade; the flour was New York's first standard commercial commodity; and the lumber was sawed by windmill power.

Ten years after his first marriage Frederick Philipse and two associates bought a huge parcel of land outside Manhattan. This was the beginning of the vast holdings that became Philipsburg Manor. To understand the compilation of the manor, it is necessary to take a brief look at earlier history.

By 1629 the Dutch West India Company had urged the establishment of settlements in New Netherland by giving entrepreneurs grants to large acreage if they would settle within a specified period 50 Dutchmen on these tracts as colonists.

These early entrepeneurs were called patroons and their properties patroonships.

Adriaen van der Donck owned a tract north of Manhattan which extended from Spuyten Duyvil to present-day Yonkers. It occupied much of the Bronx and a portion of Westchester County. Frederick Philipse and his partners bought 7,708 acres of the tract stretching along the east bank of the Hudson. Less than fourteen years later Frederick had bought each of the other one-third shares to become sole owner.

Not only was this the first block of Philipsburg Manor, it was also evidence that the commercial and businessmen of the city would prosper where the original patroons had failed. The great manor holdings that bordered the Hudson became the extensions of successful business enterprises in the city. Families associated with the Hudson Valley—the Van Cortlandts, Beek-

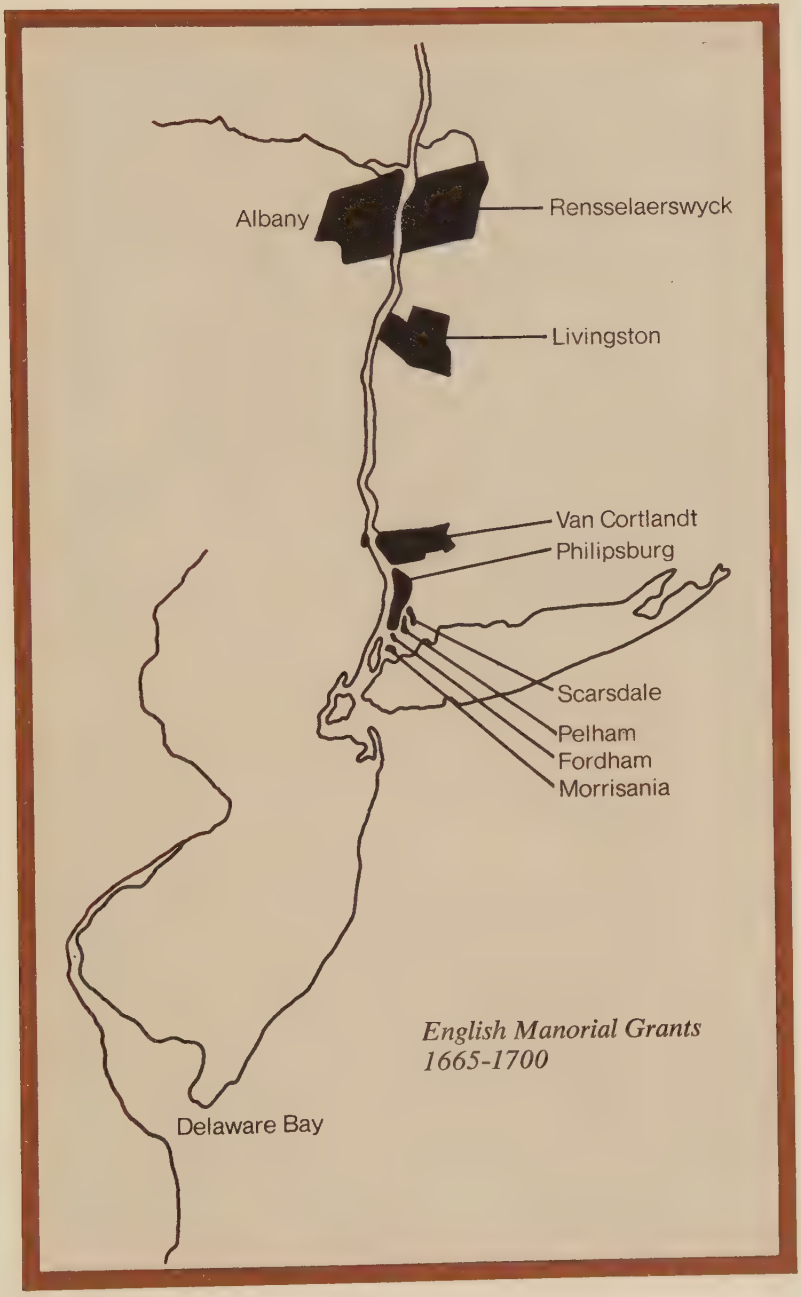
mans, Schuylers, Livingstons, Philipses and Van Rensselaers—were originally brewers, distillers, fur traders, warehousemen, shipowners, wholesalers and retailers.

Some of these families merged by marriage as well as by business. One example was when Frederick married the widow Hardenbroeck and legally adopted her child, Eva. She later married Jacobus Van Cortlandt, youngest brother of Stephanus, who was first Lord of Van Cortlandt Manor. Frederick probably influenced Eva in selecting her husband from suitors of high social and economic standing.

Frederick and Margaret had four children, Philip, Adolph, Annetje and Rombout. Philip died young leaving one small child. Annetje married an Englishman named Philip French, but had no sons; and Rombout died at an early age. It was Adolph, who was to continue his father's enterprises.

Commerce and trade were Frederick Philipse's first loves. Yet he was a good citizen of growing New York and deemed it potentially profitable to serve his townsmen. Governor Andros, the English administrator of the Colony of New York, named him an alderman in 1674, the year records show Philipse was the wealthiest man in the city. A year later Andros made Philipse a member of the Governor's Council, a post he held until 1698. This was an outstanding position of great eminence and influence held by few leaders in the city's business world.

Even then there were carping critics who ascribed Frederick's success solely to political influence. One contemporary, Jaspar Danckaerts, who was a busy diarist, made numerous entries in his diary about Councilman Philipse. He wrote: "That as Frederick Flipsen



English Manorial Grants
1665-1700

has the most shipping and does the largest trade, it is said that he is in partnership with the Governor, which is credible and inferable from the privileges which Frederick enjoys above the other merchants in regard to his goods and ships."

One fact stands out above all in the career of Frederick Philipse: no matter what his interests or his obligations, nor which flag flew above the Governor's house, Philipse was driven by the desire to acquire real estate. He bought his first New Amsterdam parcel in Marketfield, just off Bowling Green, in 1658. From then until his death in 1702, almost a half century later, he never ceased buying land. He was not alone in this eagerness to invest in tangible, long-term, property holdings. Virginia Harrington, a current historian of the period, commented on this universal wish to own land.

"Real estate," she wrote, "was always the favorite investment. A prosperous businessman seems to have bought first a house in the city, and then if possible his 'store' or warehouse. Increasing in wealth, he branched out in various directions; he might buy three or more houses in the city . . . he might go farther north into the country . . ."

Frederick Philipse's will, written in 1700, carefully enumerated his entire holdings. The listing of the properties is a testimonial to his acumen and an insight into *how* many of the early colonial fortunes were built.

In New York City Philipse owned a house on Stone Street with adjoining lands; the adjoining house; a bolting house; a cooper's house; a warehouse with adjoining land; two homes and land near the old Stadthouse; the house and ground then occupied by an Isaac Marqui; two houses on Stone Street; a house and ground on Broad Street; a warehouse and ground on New Street;

Castello Plan of New Amsterdam in 1660

the house and land then occupied by Eva and Jacobus Van Cortlandt; the house and land then occupied by Annetje and Philip French; and a lot running from the Broadway to New Street.

Besides his manor holdings, he owned a mortgage on lands in Westchester 20 miles into the woods; half interest in a sawmill in Mamaroneck; a house and grounds in Bergen, New Jersey; a 15-acre plantation and 16-acre meadow, also in Bergen; and two parcels of land totaling 990 acres in Ulster County, New York.

As Frederick Philipse prospered in his business he invested his profits in real estate. The origin of the profits did not matter. He operated ships on seas of the western world while carrying goods for others as well as for himself. Like many others of his time he engaged

in the slave trade. Certainly no corporate gambler in the modern sense, Philipse took large financial risks that usually turned out handsomely.

Much of his fortune was probably made in the wampum market, then as important to New York as the stock exchange is today. The Indians who supplied furs to the early traders refused to accept money in exchange. They saw no value in small metal objects or pieces of paper. Thus the Dutch had to acquire the little beads made from periwinkle and quahaug shells, polished and pierced for stringing.

When the British seized the colony the price of wampum skyrocketed. Philipse speculated in the Indian currency and must have cornered a good supply. *Valentine's Manual,* one of the most priceless sources of history in New York, says of his activity:

> "Those who could afford it began now to lay in the sewant (another name for wampum), or 'plant' it, in anticipation of a still greater increase in value. We have the record, that in the possession of Frederick Philipse, the wealthiest man of his day, whole hogsheads of this money were stored away."

Wampum was only one item in the list of goods Philipse dealt in. He bought and sold grain and flour, wines and brandies, tobacco, furs, tinware, bed clothing, horses, molasses, rum, logwood and slaves. Some of his profits went into real estate. And of all Philipse's property Philipsburg Manor was the most outstanding.

Aside from his home in New York Frederick Philipse best loved the land he assembled to form the vast manor that bore his name which ran along the east bank of the Hudson from Manhattan to the Croton River and inland to the Bronx River.

Its first segment was that once owned by Adriaen van

der Donck, who like the other early Dutch landholders had attracted few settlers to his holdings. The relatively brief life of Dutch patroonships was in part due to the failure to develop the land.

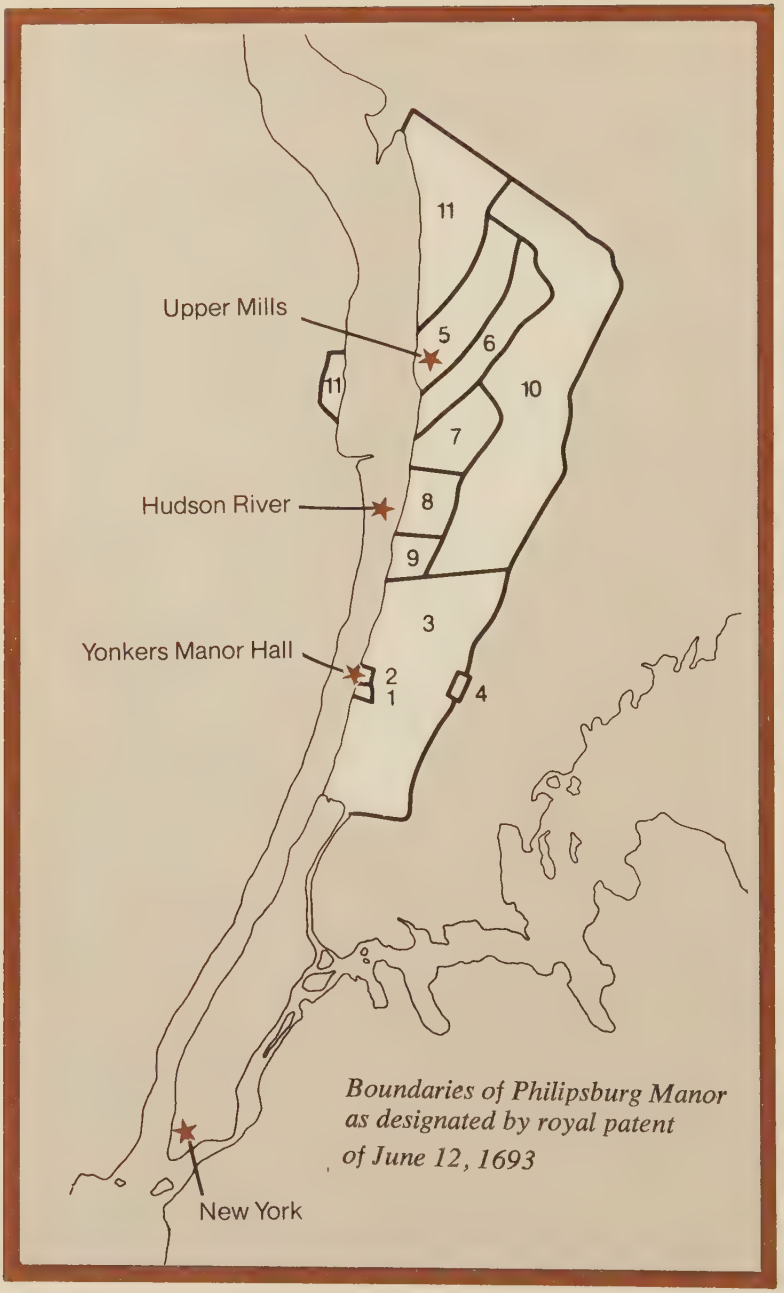
Frederick Philipse did not make this mistake.

He took full advantage of the manorial system initiated by the British upon taking over the colony from the Dutch. Under the British a purchaser first had to obtain the right to buy land by acquiring a patent from the Royal Governor. Once holdings were gathered into a large tract called a manor the Royal Governor acting for the Crown recognized the title. Under this system the Crown gave no lands to the manor holder but honored the title.

Royal approval in the creation of huge land properties was apparently motivated by one factor: men owning these manors would constitute a powerful group eager to maintain the *status quo* and thereby supposedly could be counted on to support the policies of the Crown and its local representative, the Royal Governor.

Surely Frederick Philipse as trader, shipowner, merchant and councilman in New York saw the great advantage that owning a large manor would give him. And, as a shrewd entrepeneur, he probably realized that land would be a form of wealth much more stable than other investments subject to the vagaries of local politics or international affairs.

After eight years Philipse made a second purchase of land along the Hudson River. Under an Andros patent of April 1, 1680, he bought from Indian owners the land on each side of the Pocantico River "into the country as far as the river goes with the exception that if the Yonkers Creek or Nepperhan should come within this land of 400 rods on the south side of the Pocantico,



Boundaries of Philipsburg Manor as designated by royal patent of June 12, 1693

this land only to extend to the Nepperhan."

Five separate transactions, all conducted with Indian owners, gave Philipse the property that stretched between the original purchase of the former van der Donck land and the narrow segment on the Pocantico. The purchases were made on October 24, 1680; April 23, 1681; April 8, 1682; September 6, 1682; and May 7, 1684.

A final land purchase in Westchester was carried out by his eldest son, Philip, who dealt with an Indian chieftain named Sincksink. The Indian lands ran from near the unsurveyed border between Connecticut and New York to the Hudson. Philip bought the land north of his father's Pocantico tract and south of the Croton River. For reasons unknown today Philip soon turned these lands over to his father. Several smaller parcels across the Hudson near Tappan Creek were later added to the Philipse landholdings.

In the name of the reigning monarchs, William and Mary, a royal patent or charter was granted to Frederick Philipse on June 12, 1693, creating the "Lordship or Mannour of Philipsborough." The man who had been Peter Stuyvesant's carpenter had become one of the great landholders in America.

If the Biblical saying "to them who have shall be given" ever needed substantiation, the royal patent given Frederick Philipse provided it as a clause in the document gave him an additional tract of land.

This windfall was described as "a certain neck or island of land called Papparinnomo . . . with the salt meadow thereunto belonging together with power and authority to erect a bridge over the water or river commonly called Spitondivell Ferry or Papparinnomo and to receive toll from all passengers and droves of cattoll

that shall pass thereon."

The Crown reserved the right of free passage for its horses, coaches, wagons and stores of war and ammunition. Because of this the drawbridge built on Spuyten Duyvil was called Kingsbridge. It must have been a very profitable business arrangement for Frederick Philipse.

For the benefits that accrued to him in owning the royal patent to his vast landholdings Philipse paid a fealty price. Each year he was obligated to pay "on the feast day of the Annunciation of Our Blessed Virgin Mary (March 25) at our forts in New York" four pounds, twelve shillings in his day's currency.

In return for this fee Philipse held absolute title to the property and everything on it except for any gold or silver that might be found. That would belong to the Crown. Theoretically he could rule with absolutism little different from that of the English nobleman of the Middle Ages. Philipse would hold the ancient rights of court baron and court leet and answer only to the Royal Governor for his acts.

As court baron a manor lord or his steward with a jury of his tenants served as judges in administering justice in all civil cases involving the manor. As court leet with a similar jury of tenants the manor lord administered criminal justice in all cases short of treason; that prerogative was reserved to the Governor.

With the royal patent creating Philipsburg Manor as fact Frederick Philipse then turned to its development. He rode about his 90,000 acre manor with its numerous hills, its plush valleys and tumbling creeks, its salt marshes and tiny coves and knew the land was truly what Henry Hudson's lieutenant had labeled it 84 years earlier: "a very good land . . . and a pleasant land to see."

To Frederick Philipse his estate of nearly 200 square miles represented a challenge. He never intended to let it lie fallow nor to reserve it only for hunting and fishing excursions. These uses ran counter to his character.

He saw the manor lands as a source of more revenue. It was a land to produce foodstuffs, timber and quarried stone. He envisioned wheat growing on the level fields near the Pocantico; the wheat ground to flour; and the flour shipped in barrels made from Philipse lumber on Philipse sloops and ships. He saw in the tenants who worked the land a ready-made market for goods manufactured abroad and brought to this country in his ships.

To implement this thinking he developed two central settlements for better management of the manor. One was at Yonkers to the south; the other near the mouth of the Pocantico in present-day North Tarrytown was called Upper Mills.

Gristmills were erected at each location as it was the milling of flour which would take precedence over all

Philipse Manor, Yonkers, where Frederick Philipse established a lower headquarters with dam, gristmill and residence for his landholdings.

other activities. A third mill, operated under lease to a tenant, was later built inland on the Sawmill River. More tenants were added to the work force and many clearings were made in the deep woods that had given the Pocantico its Indian name.

Though the mill at Yonkers thrived, Upper Mills seems to have been Frederick Philipse's chief interest for a two-fold reason: nature had endowed the vicinity with rare beauty; and the setting was ideal for his plans.

The mouth of the Pocantico emptied into a deep cove that cut in from the Hudson. Shelving rock provided a ready-made location for a millpond created by the river when dammed to power an overshot waterwheel

and mill. The deeper water of the cove allowed sturdy Hudson River sloops to tie up at the mill wharf in order to load their cargoes of barrelled flour for New York or for transshipment to other ports. For many miles along the Hudson this cove was the only site to offer a sheltered navigable bay.

The exact date of construction at Upper Mills is not recorded but the April 1, 1680, documents concerning Philipse's first purchase of land north of the former van der Donck property mentions granting rights for "erecting and building a mill and making a damme" at the Pocantico. This occurred during the term of Governor Andros. Four years later a successor, Governor Dongan, confirmed the title "to the Creeke Pocanteco or Weehkanteco upon which at present stands the mill of the sd. Frederick Philipse."

Between 1680 and 1682 oak trees were cut down to provide timbers for the mill and dwelling; and logs were hewn for the dam. Fieldstone was dragged by teams of horses and oxen for the foundations and lime burned for the mortar.

No sooner had the first uprights and joists been pegged in place before the government of Connecticut was complaining to the deputy governor in New York that Philipse was building on Connecticut property.

There had been a tentative Connecticut boundary settlement in 1664, when a nebulous line had been described as running from Mamaroneck harbor on Long Island Sound to a point on the Hudson well below the Pocantico. As the dispute grew the two colonies named delegates to a meeting where the boundary settlement would be made. It is more than significant that Philipse and his old friend and nextdoor neighbor, Stephen Van Cortlandt, served on the New York delegation. With

The harbor, lower left, near Upper Mills as it might have appeared during Frederick Philipse's lifetime. Early Dutch settlers called this bay

such personal involvement they must have been very persuasive, for the boundary line was moved eastward to the Byram River near present-day Port Chester. It has never changed.

Dispute or not, construction continued and the original, rough buildings were improved. The log dam, built to hold the waters of the pond, was constructed with cribbing to hold clay and stones packed together. A footpath ran along the top of the dam to give the miller access to floodgates so he could control the flow of water through the wooden sluice and over the wheel.

The purpose behind Frederick's decision to build a mill is intriguing. From 1680 to 1694 New York had a

"die Slapering Haven", which author Washington Irving years later freely translated as Sleepy Hollow in describing the surrounding area.

law called the Bolting Act, which forbade bolting or packing of flour anywhere except in New York City. This granted a monopoly to New York City merchants. Bolting is a sifting process which removes bran and chaff. With his own bolting house in the city Philipse could benefit easily from two operations: growing and milling of wheat at Upper Mills; and bolting, coopering and shipping in New York. By his move up the river Philipse established a fullscale production-distribution cycle: from farm to factory to management. The existence of at least 40 families, about 200 individuals, on the lands near the mill provided a market for goods brought back from where the flour was shipped.

The years passed fast for Frederick Philipse, who though still active and energetic knew his life was nearing the end. This may have led him to build a home at Upper Mills for when he traveled there as well as a church where he could worship with his family and tenants.

His home was simple by any period's standards. It was erected on the rock ledge surrounding the mill-pond on the north side. Its lower floor was actually built into the slight rise of land. The upper two floors were one room wide and two deep while the lower level had two rooms: a kitchen and a cellar.

After the house was built of rough-hewn blocks of native stone and fieldstone and mortared with riverbank clay, it was whitewashed and roofed with hand-split shingles cut nearby.

From the mill one entered the house at ground-level by going into the kitchen used by farmers, millhands and servants. Deeper into the bank behind the kitchen was a cool storage cellar. Stairs beside a massive stone fireplace led up to the Philipse living quarters. More precisely they led into another kitchen, that of the family, which shared the main floor with a chamber called the foreroom. Up another flight were two bedrooms and under the roof was a full-length garret used mainly to store oats and wheat.

Artist's conception of a sloop at the wharf at Upper Mills.

A huge, single chimney rose through the center of the house. There was a fireplace for the worker's room, two back-to-back fireplaces for the family kitchen and foreroom and another pair for the two bed chambers.

It is difficult now to imagine this house as the country home of the man called the wealthiest in all New York City. There were leaded glass casement windows and heavy wooden shutters, chandeliers and sconces holding candles and sturdy furniture, but little more. However, for Frederick Philipse, the former Dutch imigrant and carpenter, it sufficed.

A later figure with Dutch blood in his veins who was descendant of early Hudson Valley settlers once commented on such homes. He was Franklin D. Roosevelt,

who observed:

> "We are prone to think of our forebears as living ideal lives of rural comfort in large houses with many rooms, with high ceilings and abundantly furnished, but one fact that stands out clearly . . . is that the mode of life of the first settlers of New Netherlands and of their immediate descendants was extremely simple, a statement which is true not only of the smaller landowners but of many of the patentees of large grants. From high to low their lives were the lives of pioneers, lives of hardship, of privation and often of danger. Roads were few and rough, household belongings modest, and the dwelling that contained more than four rooms was an exception."

Philipse built his church about 150 yards away from the house. It was of similar construction except that it had some brick from Holland brought to America as ship's ballast. The church has changed over the years. Yet, it is essentially the same structure Philipse built. The steeple holds the same bell cast in the Netherlands bearing the inscription SI DEUS PRO NOBIS QUIS CONTRA NOS—1685 (If God be for us, who can be against us?)

A weathervane still tops the church bearing the Frederick Philipse symbol in the shape of a flag. Still used on special occasions are a silver baptismal bowl and a silver beaker, both bearing his name, and a beaker with the name of Frederick's second wife, the former Catharine Van Cortlandt Dervall.

Catharine was a widow of 40 when she married Frederick, who was then in his mid 60's. She was the daughter of Oloff Stevense Van Cortlandt; and their marriage tied the Philipse and Van Cortlandt families even

The Old Dutch Church of Sleepy Hollow, built by Frederick Philipse about 1697.

closer.

If history handles Margaret the Commercial harshly, it treats Catharine to a point approaching adulation. As Margaret was wordly and self-centered, Catharine appeared devoted to her home, her husband and, above all, her church.

Long after her death the building became known as "The Old Dutch Church of Sleepy Hollow." Among the earliest records is a list of communicants from 1697 to 1715 which a reverent clerk began this way:

"First and above all
The right honorable, blessed, very wise, foreseeing Lady Catharine Philips, widow of Lord Frederick Philips of blessed memory, who did in this locality, in the most praiseworthy manner, further the service of God."

The couple is easy to perceive, even after all these years. First was the elderly Frederick, well past the scriptural three score and ten; then came his good wife, busy with her charities and her devotions. Both were honored by the inhabitants of Upper Mills with the incorrect but highly laudatory titles of Lord and Lady and both attended church services Sundays with their family, friends, neighbors, tenants, servants and slaves.

If proof is needed that Upper Mills was Frederick's favorite home, his will of 1700 should serve that purpose. He listed all his servants and slaves who dwelled by the Pocantico and barely mentioned those who lived at the Yonkers settlement. But most importantly he commanded his executors to see that he was buried at the church he built near Upper Mills.

Additional evidence exists revealing Frederick's strong preference for his northern property. Upon dividing his holdings he left Upper Mills to Adolph, the son who was his partner, his confidant and his closest offspring.

The founder of the family fortune well knew Adolph would love *this pleasant land* even as he had.

How much time Adolph Philipse was able to devote to Upper Mills is unknown. He must have been one of the busiest men in New York if early newspaper accounts are believable. One comment referred to Adolph as a member of the King's Council, a judge of the Supreme Court of the Colony, a Representative and later Speaker in the Assembly and an official of the Dutch Church.

He also spent considerable time in London. For 40 years he was a highway commissioner of Westchester County. The leader of a conservative element in the Assembly, Adolph was Speaker for two terms that spanned about two decades and did not retire until reaching the age of 80. Throughout everything his business enterprises grew.

With all this activity he kept a close watch on the affairs at Upper Mills and often stayed in the Manor House. As Upper Mills business steadily increased, a third set of millstones was added so barley could be ground as well as wheat and corn. Consequently more space in the Manor House was needed. About 1720 Adolph therefore doubled the size of the house by simply duplicating the original architectural plans. He created four rooms on each of the structure's levels where two had previously existed.

The addition produced a dairy room on the lowest

Portrait of Adolph Philipse, 1665-1750.
The artist is unknown.

Artist's conception of the Manor House from 1720 to 1750.

level besides the "kitchen below" and the cellar; an office overlooking the mill and wharf for his overseer, William Aartse; another parlor on the main floor; and two new bedrooms on the second level. Adolph used a room over the office when he stayed there. By extending the roof he expanded the garret over the entire building, gaining storage space for grain.

Long before this building expansion the Bolting Act had been nullified, ending New York City's monopoly on refining flour. Bolting equipment had been added to the mill operation and a coopering shop had also been built nearby to make staves for barrels.

When Adolph visited Upper Mills he saw his tenants, employees and slaves bringing grain in from the

Reproduction of bolting machine now in granary of Gristmill. The machine sifts freshly ground flour.

farms and taking it to the mill. From the mill's upper floor the grain was gravity-fed to the millstones and the flour was bolted and then collected in barrels. Other workmen brought in wood cut from the Westchester forests to make barrels. Some flour went to New York City just as it came from the mill; some was shipped to more distant ports; and much of it went to a bakeshop erected at Upper Mills, where ship biscuits were made.

These biscuits were a very important article of commerce in the days of sailing ships. They resembled hardtack more than a modern biscuit, were exceedingly firm and dry and thus could withstand dampness at sea for

a long time before molding. Adolph obviously needed large supplies for his fleet, but he also shipped large quantities by sloop down to the New York market.

The sloops that carried much of the produce and trade goods on the Hudson were sturdy craft. Wide of beam, stout of keel and not particularly fast, they slowly sailed up and down the river between New York and Upper Mills in one day unless beset by a dead calm. Adolph as a highway commissioner worked to improve the rough dirt roads; however, highways never easy to maintain were far less acceptable than the river as a means of transportation. Besides the two main buildings and the church, Upper Mills had added several other structures by the time Adolph ceased his travels abroad. They included, as a deed made clear, "a very good Bakehouse for Bisquet," a barn, a Negro-house, sheep-folds, pig sty, chicken coops, stables, cow barn and a limehouse (to make components) for mortar. Although the manor holdings ran to thousands of acres, the farm at Upper Mills consisted of 200 acres of cleared land, plus a large orchard and fresh and salt meadows.

Under Adolph's management the tenant population grew steadily from 200 inhabitants on the farm in 1702 to about 1,100 in 1750, the year he died. The slave population in 1750 was 23. Newspaper advertisements dealing with the settling of the estate after his death listed one of the slaves as the miller, one as a boatman and two as farmers. Others were bakers, laborers, woodsmen and household servants.

Tenants held their property by verbal leases. Few of them at that time had the security of written documents to prove their rights to live on and work their farms. Tenants were easier to control if they had no written leases. Hardly democratic, the system gave the lord of

the manor the best of the arrangement. He could raise the rents, get a share of the improvements at a later sale to another tenant and had the final word whether the tenant's son or heir would take over a piece of property. Though these leases seem unfair by contemporary standards, one should remember most landlords then were less generous than the Philipses. Philipsburg Manor lands were always fully leased and at least one writer, John Watts of New York, stated that the Philipses were considered mild landlords and did not "disturb" their tenants.

As Adolph Philipse was an aristocrat and exceedingly wealthy, it followed that his relatives and closest friends were of the same status. Yet he was not tyrannical or over-bearing, although enormous wealth gave him great influence. The political party he led fought for more rights for the Colonists thereby eroding the Crown's prerogatives. During his years in the Assembly many of the provincial seeds of popular representative government were sown. Some historians have engaged in the luxury of wondering whether Adolph would have sided with the Colonists when the War of Independence broke out. Most believe he would have risked property and position to cast his lot with Washington, Adams and Jefferson.

When Adolph died without leaving a will in 1750 Upper Mills went to his nephew, Frederick Philipse II, who had been given the Yonkers Plantation by the first Frederick. Frederick II also received Adolph's Highland Patent, which consisted of virtually all contemporary Putnam County and other properties as well. Once again the entire manor lands were held by one member of the Philipse family. But this was not destined to remain so very long.

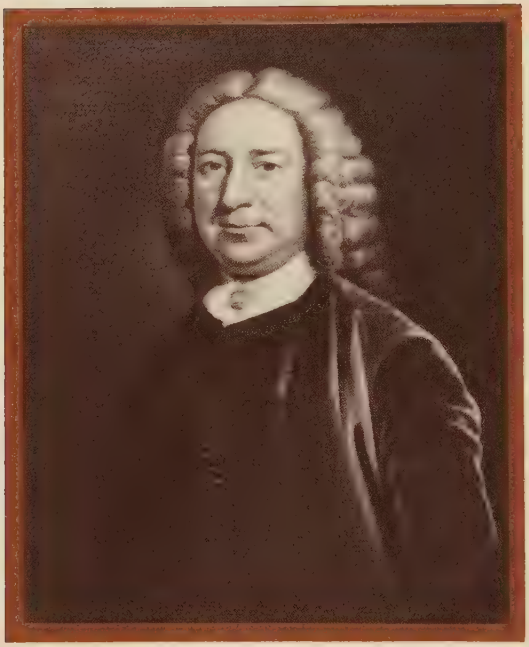
Frederick Philipse II was six when the founder of the Philipse land-empire died. He had inherited the southern half of the Manor under a trusteeship arrangement whereby his grandmother, Catharine, was to manage it and him until he attained legal age.

Family tradition says Catharine took the boy to England for his education. This story is strengthened by the absence of Catharine's name in any official records from 1707 to 1716.

He married Joanna Brockholls, daughter of a former Royal Governor, and had four sons and six daughters. The family lived in a mansion in Yonkers which made the Upper Mills dwelling appear humble in comparison. It was surrounded by boxwood hedges, flower gardens, ornamental shrubs and trees, even a deer park. Records show 30 white and 20 Negro servants worked to maintain the mansion and its grounds.

Though Frederick II was active in shipping and commerce, his great interests were politics and law. From 1731 until his death he was Justice of the Supreme Court of the colony and gained considerable fame as one of three judges who presided at the trial of Peter Zenger for seditious libel. That case is a landmark in the history of American freedom of the press.

One year after he became Lord of all Philipsburg Manor, Frederick II died and the manor passed intact



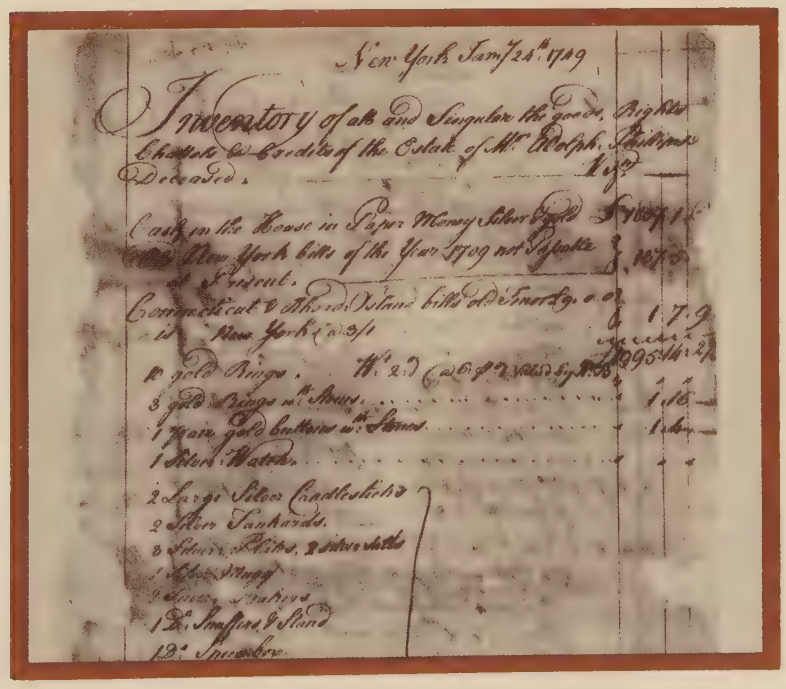
Portrait of Frederick Philipse II 1695-1751 painted by American artist John Wollaston.

to his eldest son, Frederick III. The third to carry the name Frederick lost no time in disposing of property he did not wish to live on or manage. Five months after his father's death he put Upper Mills up for lease. It was a temporary lease, followed in 1761 by one granted to William Pugsley for 31 years at £200 a year. Pugsley acquired the entire rights to the Upper Mills headquarters property of 720 acres except for the church lands and burial grounds and a limit on the amount of timber to be cut.

Frederick III was content to live in luxury at his Yonkers mansion, well supported by rent others provided in working his property. The role of Upper Mills in the integrated trading-milling-shipping Philipse tradition had ended. It had become just one more piece of property producing rental income for a Philipse heir.

Frederick III married a widow, Elizabeth Rutgers. Living the life of a country gentleman, he visited and was visited by his surviving sisters, Mary and Susannah, who lived with their husbands on the vast Highland Patent inherited from Adolph Philipse. Susannah was the wife of Colonel Beverly Robinson, a Virginian and son of a former acting governor of that colony. Mary married Roger Morris, a British soldier, but not, according to legend, until she had been unsuccessfully courted by George Washington. Her New York City house is now a museum known as the Jumel Mansion. The New York State Trust now maintains the Yonkers mansion, called Philipse Manor Hall, as an historic site.

Section of estate inventory of Adolph Philipse dated Jan. 24, 1749.


New York Jan.ry 24th 1749

Inventory of all and Singular the Goods, Rights Chattels & Credits of the Estate of Mr Adolph Philipse Deceased.

Cash in the House in Paper Money Silver & Gold
New York bills of the Year 1709 not Specie
Federal
Connecticut & Rhode Island bills old Tenor
New York
10 gold Rings
3 gold Rings with Stones
1 Pair gold Buttons with Stones
1 Silver Watch
2 Large Silver Candlesticks
2 Silver Tankards
1 Dr Smelling Silver Bottle
12 Silver Spoons

When the Revolutionary War began the Philipses had to choose between loyalty to the British or joining the American patriots. Frederick chose the Crown and tried for a time to continue living in Yonkers. In 1776 he was arrested and sent to Connecticut. Later he moved his family behind the British lines in New York City, staying there in safety until the British departed. He sailed for England in 1783 and died in Chester on April 30, 1785.

Frederick had been attainted of treason in 1779, ordered banished from the state and his property confiscated. While he lay dying in England his forfeited manor lands were put up for public sale by the state.

Gerard G. Beekman, Jr., a prominent New York businessman had bought the remainder of the Pugsley lease to Upper Mills in 1784. At a public auction of 1785 he purchased the 750-acre parcel outright for £9,040. It was ironic that his wife was Cornelia Van Cortlandt Beekman, a great-grandniece of Catharine, second wife of Frederick Philipse I.

At that public auction the balance of the manor's properties was sold in odd parcels. Some lots were as small as one or two acres. When the auctioneer's gavel fell for the last time the manor lands were owned by 287 different individuals, whereas before one person had held absolute title with 270 tenant families on the manor's tracts.

The Beekmans ran Upper Mills as a farm. They made a few changes in the main house, did some milling and stone quarrying until Gerard died in 1822. Pressed for funds, Cornelia laid out a portion of the property into streets and building lots and then sold the lots. They became part of what is now the Village of North Tarrytown.

Following Cornelia Beekman's death in 1847 Upper Mills passed through many ownerships. In 1916 Miss Elsie Janis, the singer and entertainer who gained popularity in World War I as "The Sweetheart of the AEF" because she so frequently entertained American troops, purchased the property. Miss Janis lived there with her mother, adding sun porches to the house as well as building summer houses and planting flower gardens. A bank foreclosed the mortgage on the property in 1937.

This legal action ended an era. For the first time since Frederick Philipse I had bought the tract from the Indians more than two and a half centuries earlier the headquarters property of Philipsburg Manor was no longer held by a private owner.

Rumors spread locally that the Upper Mills property was to be divided into building lots by a developer. The Historical Society of the Tarrytowns moved to preserve the remnant of the once vast Philipsburg Manor. The society appealed for funds and gained the support of a renowned local resident, Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who provided the financial support to save the property. It later passed into the hands of Sleepy Hollow Restorations, Inc., the non-profit, educational organization established by Mr. Rockefeller to preserve Sunnyside, Washington Irving's home in Tarrytown; Van Cort-

The Manor House as photographed in 1923, when owned by Miss Elsie Janis, "The Sweetheart of the AEF."

landt Manor in Croton-on-Hudson; and Philipsburg Manor.

Thus the crucial step was taken to permit the restoration of Upper Mills and preserve it for posterity so Americans may be more aware of what life was like in the early days of Dutch and English colonialism in New York.

It is one thing to decide to restore; it is something else to carry out all that "restore" implies. In the case of Philipsburg Manor a house had been altered frequently during the two centuries following its prime era. A mill and several other structures also survived. However, they were not even in their original locations.

The carefully reasoned approach to restoration was to conduct a precise study that would determine several points: how much of the house was original structure? what were additions? what was the mill's first location? and as nearly as possible, what was Upper Mills's exact appearance in the period of 1720 to 1750, the apex of the Philipse ownership?

In 1956 such a full-scale study began. For nearly a decade experts in archaeological, architectural and documentary research delved into historical records and concurrently explored the Philipsburg Manor grounds for the kind of evidence that would contribute archaeological accuracy to the restoration.

Archaeological excavation at the mill-dam site showing original pilings and foundations as constructed by Frederick Philipse I in early 1680s.

Piles of shards excavated during archaelogical diggings carried out at Upper Mills during early restoration of the property. Shards include clay pipes, pottery, tools and brick.

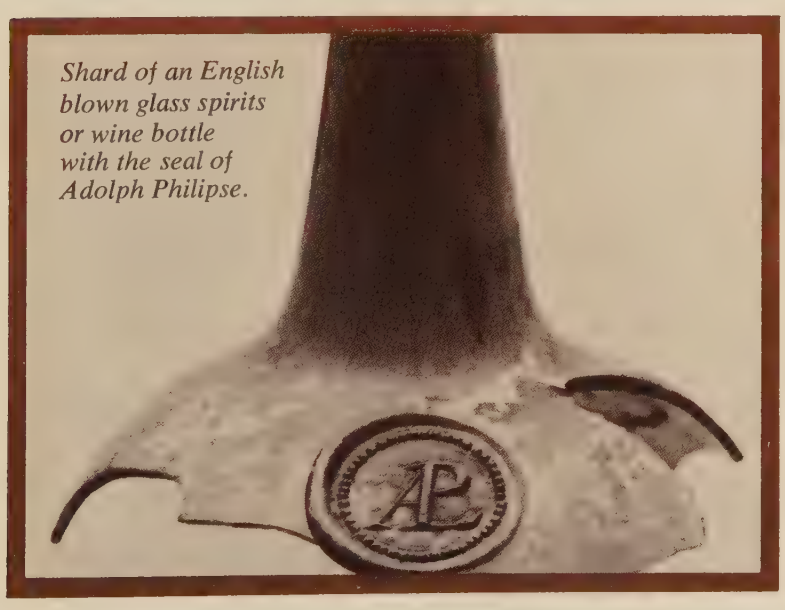
Extensive archaeological diggings were carried out to eliminate all doubt regarding what had existed on the site in the mid-1700s and exactly where structures had originally stood. One of the first facts that was discovered showed that a gristmill reconstructed in the 1940s was standing on the foundations of an earlier mill built in the early 19th century. Unearthed beneath the 19th century mill, in turn, were foundations of the original Philipse mill with its raceway and wharf. Immediately adjacent and still intact was the almost complete flooring for the work area of Adolph Philipse's warehouse. Further excavations revealed dam substructures that had been erected in the time of the first two

Philipses. Also found was evidence of many repairs that showed how often the earlier dams had been damaged by flood waters and storms.

In addition to the foundations huge quantities of wood, metal, ceramics and glass artifacts were discovered deep in the earth. These shards were most numerous along the excavated shoreline of the millpond near the dwelling house and the mill and also in the subsoil under the water near where the wharf had stood.

The artifacts told a fascinating story. Those of wood reflected the craft operations involved in ship and mill repair, coopering and other woodworking enterprises conducted on the site in the 17th and 18th centuries. The English and Continental ceramics were positive proof of the scope of Philipse world trade. Also found were a few Indian fur trade items such as beads and knives usually bartered for pelts.

Finally numerous household items were excavated.



Shard of an English blown glass spirits or wine bottle with the seal of Adolph Philipse.

They provided invaluable clues to the types of objects with which the original house was furnished and how it was built. The items included iron cooking vessels, fireplace kettles, earthenware containers, glass bottles, window glass, lead cames, locks, hinges, shutter hooks, clay smoking pipes and brick brought to America from Holland as ship's ballast.

Archaeologists, architects, historians and curators used these artifacts in determining what the early structures had been like and what the people of the era had used in their work, cooking, household chores and, to a limited degree, their amusements.

Though the Manor House stood on its original foundations with the original massive four stone sides intact, it had been enlarged and some of its room arrangements, stairways and fireplaces had been changed or moved. Window openings had been increased as had the doors. Many different owners in the 19th and 20th centuries had added rooms, porches and even new wings; but the central section of the house, the original structure, still stood on its original foundations on the original site with a number of original roofing timbers in good condition.

As additions were removed the simplicity of the early Manor House was revealed : a two-story plus-attic structure. Underlying one portion of the building was the kitchen hollowed out of the hillside where the home was built. Four rooms were on each floor.

Architectural surveys plus architectural research established how compact the stone house built by Frederick I had been. With this information and also by comparing it against other existing Hudson Valley homes of the period it was possible to restore the Manor House to its size, style and character of the mid-1700s.

Photograph of the Manor House during the 1940s with the wooden addition at right. This section was known as the Beekman Wing built shortly after 1785, when Gerard Beekman bought Upper Mills.

After the architecture of the building was determined there began the task of furnishing the Manor House, as authentically as possible, to the period when Adolph lived there.

Here the task was made easier by the existence of documents in libraries, court records and similar archives. One document was a list compiled at the time of Adolph's death in 1750 that gave the furnishings of each room as well as of some of the other outbuildings.

Although the actual dressers, tables, bedsteads, chairs and similar items are not those Adolph owned, they are authentically of the same period. In the kitchen are a few utensils that were used during Adolph's tenure. They were recovered during the excavations.

Rebuilding the dam, gristmill and wharf was done

Artist's rendering of the Gristmill during reconstruction.

in the same careful manner on the sites of original foundations. The architects studied old mills in this country and in Europe—some of the same period—and consulted old manuals and other books pertaining to construction of mills, the milling process and relevant material. Every effort was made to follow original construction methods. Timbers were joined as they had been before the Revolutionary War; nails were handmade just as early nails had been; and the dam was erected in the same way in which the first one had been built across the Pocantico River.

The visitor who now tours Philipsburg Manor walks about the property looking at a very accurate restoration thanks to two efforts: the tireless research that went into the project before physical restoration even began; and the care and devotion expended by those

North side of Manor House at left with west side at right facing the Hudson.

who rebuilt the dam, gristmill and Manor House. However, the visitor cannot see the entire Manor as it was in 1750. The thousands of acres that ran along the Hudson from Manhattan to the hills above the Pocantico have shrunk to some 20 acres. Where hardwood forests covered the land, suburban homes stand; and vast fields once tilled by tenant farmers are now criss-crossed by highways, railroads and streets.

Though the Hudson has changed little physically, the Pocantico has been dammed in its upper reaches to create a reservoir. The cove where Philipse sloops waited to load and unload cargoes at the nearby mill

Foreroom, Manor House.

Parlor, Manor House.

Milkroom, Manor House.

Lower Kitchen, Manor House.

Manor House office of Mr. Aartse, foreman of Upper Mills

wharf has silted up to where it is little more than marshland.

No attempt was made to reconstruct other known structures on the property. Insufficient evidence exists to locate them or to determine their appearance.

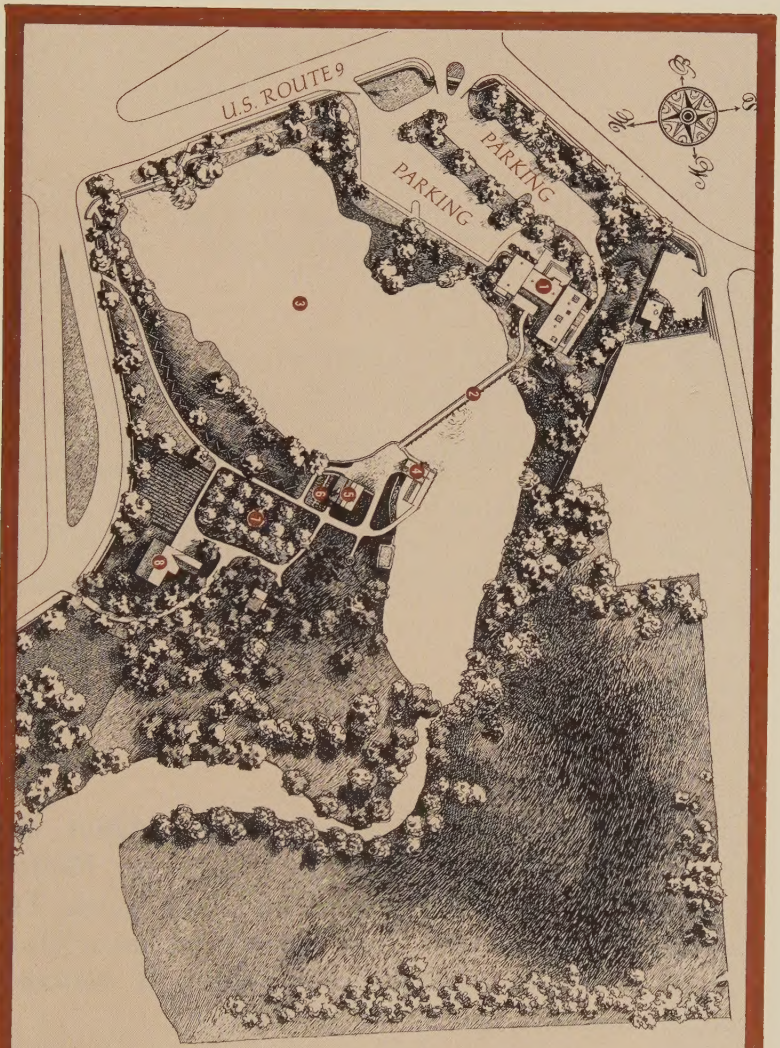
A visitor might ponder upon the main features of the original Upper Mills: a stone dwelling house with four rooms to a floor, a kitchen "below" and a kitchen "above"; a water-powered gristmill with two sets of stones for grinding corn and wheat; an adjoining storehouse; a wharf where a sloop could float close to the mill door for loading and unloading; a sturdy dam; a

mill pond of stored water to power the millwheel; a kitchen garden with herbs and vegetables grown by the early settlers; and the orchard, salt meadow, fresh meadow, woodland, fields and pastures.

In surveying this scene one can visualize the era when Dutch settlers with courage and vision used rich agricultural lands, started new industries and built a commercial trade that saw their flags flying in the ports of many overseas nations. Philipsburg Manor will remind the visitor of Dutch exploration and settlement, of English loyalties, of bitter strife and early struggles.

On these 20 acres near the Hudson River one can see and almost feel the beginnings of America's glory. Some of the history made by the Dutch, English and American men and women has seeped into the stones, wood beams, the dam's timbers and the very fiber of house and mill. More than anything else this sweep of history is what makes Philipsburg Manor, Upper Mills, unique.

Interior of Gristmill



1. Reception Building
2. Dam
3. Millpond
4. Gristmill, Granary and Wharf
5. Manor House
6. Kitchen Garden
7. Orchard
8. Barn

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